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that overburdened him. The revolution, especially the last seventeen years of it, had practically extinguished the old senatorial nobility, and it was a decadent senate which deputed to Augustus all the powers of absolutism. He enjoyed their exercise, and wished his successor to enjoy them, and forged for his own soul its greatest sorrows by the way in which he played fast and loose with the most sacred things in the hearts of his children, in order that he might have a lineal successor—that he might found a dynasty.

With Ferrero's treatment of Ovid one can be heartily content. And this is a great satisfaction after the righteous anger which his treatment of Vergil and Horace has awakened in us. We seemed to detect in his constant sneer the attitude of the uneducated socialist, of the anarchist, toward art and letters. But we have no protest against his sneers at the author of the *Ars Amatoria*.

B. PERRIN.

#### BOOKS OF MEDIEVAL AND MODERN EUROPEAN HISTORY

*The Enforcement of the Statutes of Labourers during the First Decade after the Black Death, 1349-1359.* By BERTHA HAVEN PUTNAM, Ph.D., Instructor in History at Mount Holyoke College. [Studies in History, Economics and Public Law, edited by the Faculty of Political Science of Columbia University. Volume XXXII.] (New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 1908. Pp. xi, 224, 480.)

THE monograph of Dr. Putnam will command serious attention as a study of those restless and problematical years immediately following the Black Death and more remotely preceding the Peasants' Revolt. As the title barely suggests, the work is a study on the administrative rather than the economic side of the history of Edward III.'s noted labor laws, the operation of which is followed through the various agencies of the government employed for their enforcement. For the purposes of a review, the book may be described in two aspects: first as a process of investigation, and second as to its subject-matter.

The investigative process begins with the Ordinance of Laborers of 1349 and the more extended Statute of Laborers of 1351, of which revised texts are given. Commissions and instructions to the itinerant justices of laborers are found in the chancery enrollments, chiefly the Patent Rolls. The fortunate discovery of eighteen small rolls containing fragments of the proceedings of these justices, which escaped destruction in the Peasants' Revolt apparently by the accident of being incorrectly filed among the Assize Rolls, has made it possible, meagre as these records are, to observe the enforcement as carried into the country. By dint of search among the more abundant records of the Exchequer, the King's Bench, and the Common Pleas, as many as 9,000 cases relat-

ing to the labor statutes have been revealed. The vast extent of these sources has justified the author in her limitation of time to a period of ten years and in confining her search almost entirely to the archives of the Public Record Office, observing mainly the operation of the king's courts, giving less attention to the enforcement as carried on by the local courts of the counties, the hundreds and the manors, while the action of ecclesiastical authorities has been omitted entirely as requiring separate treatment. Even with these limitations the work represents the most extensive investigation of a single question through the various administrative and judicial records which has yet been made. The larger part of the book contains transcripts of hitherto unpublished documents principally of illustrative cases before the courts, many of which have an interest apart from the subject in view.

On the side of material facts the book affords an interesting array of new evidence on various questions economic and political, although from the incompleteness of the survey some of the conclusions can only tentatively be offered.

As to the moot question, upon which writers have differed most widely, whether wages were kept down by the measures or not, the author dissents emphatically from those who have represented the statutes as ineffective. They were strongly operative, she believes, temporarily at least, in keeping wages at a lower level than they would otherwise have reached.

Upon the still more difficult problem whether the enforcement of the statutes quickened or retarded the emancipation of the villeins, with some reserve it is shown that in the disputes which came before the king's justices the lords were striving to secure laborers at low wages rather than to recover their escaped bondsmen, and that the charges most frequently brought before the courts were those of violation of the wage clauses of the laws. The recovery of villeins, therefore, if undertaken by judicial processes, must have been rather through the agency of the local courts which remain to be investigated.

The interest of the book is sustained by a persuasive literary style and by a workmanship which is admirable in several respects. The footnotes are ample in explanations and gracious acknowledgment of all assistance received; the transcriptions have been made by the expert hand of Miss Mary Martin whose work is notably accurate; and the selections of the appendix are plainly correlated with the text which they illustrate.

JAMES F. BALDWIN.